

1. (Twice Amended) A preformed sleeve for covering a pot having an upper end, a lower end, and an outer peripheral surface, comprising:

a base portion having an upper end, a closed lower end, and an interior space when opened, the base portion initially having a flat condition prior to being opened for receiving the pot into the interior space and having a tapered shape when in the flat condition;

a skirt portion extending from the upper end of the base portion; and

a plurality of substantially unconnected, vertically oriented, expandable folds in the base portion, and wherein when the pot is disposed within the interior space of the base portion, the expandable folds in the base portion expand to cause the base portion to cover and surround the outer peripheral surface of the pot.

12. (Twice Amended) A preformed sleeve for covering a pot having an upper end, a lower end, and an outer peripheral surface, comprising:

a lower portion having an upper end, a lower end having a bottom, and an interior space when opened, the

lower portion initially having a flat condition prior to being opened for receiving the pot into the interior space and having a tapered shape when in the flat condition;

an upper portion extending from the lower portion and which is detachable therefrom via a detaching element; and

a plurality of substantially unconnected vertically oriented, expandable folds in the lower portion and wherein when the pot is disposed within the interior space of the lower portion, the expandable folds in the lower portion expand to cause the base portion to cover and surround at least a portion of the outer peripheral surface of the pot.

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13. (Twice Amended) The preformed sleeve of claim 12 wherein the upper portion is further defined as being sized to substantially surround and enclose a floral disposed within the pot.

14. (Twice Amended) The preformed sleeve of claim 12 further defined as constructed from a material having a thickness in a range of from about 0.1 mil to about 30 mils.

15. (Twice Amended) The preformed sleeve of claim 12 further defined as constructed from a material selected from the group consisting of treated or untreated paper, metal foil, polymeric film, non-polymeric film, cardboard, fiber, cloth, burlap, and laminations or combinations thereof.

16. (Twice Amended) The preformed sleeve of claim 12 wherein the extendable folds are selected from the group consisting of pleats, folds each having a z-shaped cross section, or accordion-type folds.

17. (Twice Amended) The preformed sleeve of claim 12 further comprising a portion for serving as a handle or support device.

18. (Twice Amended) The preformed sleeve of claim 12 wherein the lower portion has a drainage hole.

19. (Twice Amended) The preformed sleeve of claim 12 wherein the plurality of extendable folds are continuous.

20. (Twice Amended) The preformed sleeve of claim 12 wherein the bottom of the lower end of the lower portion is closed.

21. (Twice Amended) A method of covering a pot having an upper end, a lower end, and an outer peripheral surface, comprising the steps of:

providing a preformed sleeve comprising:

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a base portion having an upper end, a closed lower end, and an interior space when opened, the base portion initially having a flat condition prior to being opened for receiving the pot into the interior space and having a tapered shape when in the flat condition,

a skirt portion extending from the upper end of the base portion, and

a plurality of substantially unconnected, vertically oriented, expandable folds in the base portion; and disposing the pot into the interior space of the base portion causing the expandable folds in the base portion to expand to cause the base portion to cover and surround at least a portion of the outer peripheral surface of the pot.

22. (Twice Amended) The method of claim 21 wherein in the step of providing a preformed sleeve, the preformed sleeve further comprises an upper portion extending from the skirt portion and which is detachable therefrom via a detaching element.

23. (Twice Amended) The method of claim 21 wherein in the step of providing a preformed sleeve the plurality of expandable folds are continuous between the base portion and the skirt portion.

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24. (Twice Amended) The method of claim 22 wherein in the step of providing the preformed sleeve the upper portion is sized to substantially surround and enclose a floral grouping disposed within the pot.

31. (Once Amended) A preformed sleeve for covering a pot having an upper end, a lower end, and an outer peripheral surface, comprising:

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a base portion having an upper end, a closed lower end, and an interior space when opened, the base portion initially having a flat condition prior to being opened for receiving the pot into the interior space and having a tapered shape when in the flat condition; and

a plurality of substantially unconnected, vertically oriented, expandable folds in the base portion.

32. (Once Amended) The preformed sleeve of claim 31 further comprising an upper portion detachable via a detaching element.

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33. (Once Amended) The preformed sleeve of claim 31 wherein the plurality of expandable folds further comprises a plurality of pleats, a plurality of folds each having a z-shaped cross section, or a plurality of accordion-type folds.

35. (Once Amended) A method of covering a pot having an upper end, a lower end, and an outer peripheral surface, comprising the steps of:

providing a preformed sleeve comprising:

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a base portion having an upper end, a closed lower end, and an interior space when opened, the base portion initially having a flat condition prior to being opened for receiving the pot into the interior space and having a tapered shape when in the flat condition; and

a plurality of substantially unconnected, vertically oriented, expandable folds in the base portion; and

disposing the pot into the interior space of the base portion of the preformed sleeve wherein the base portion covers and surrounds at least a portion of the outer peripheral surface of the pot.